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ABSTRACT

The outcomes of charter schools to date are inconclusive. This report examines the charter legislation in 25 states in reference to the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) criteria. The criteria evaluate the legislation in regard to the likelihood that it will produce quality schools and/or serve as examples of how the larger system of public schools should operate. The analysis indicates that not all states require that charter schools develop programs that are consonant with state and/or local standards; that all states prohibit charter schools from charging tuition, but are less clear regarding fees and donations; and that there is great variety in the governance structures of charter states. The report offers the following recommendations: (1) charter schools must be based on high academic standards; (2) charter-school students must take the same tests as other students in the state and district; (3) charter-school employees should be covered by the collective-bargaining agreement; (4) charter schools should be required to hire certified teachers; (5) charter schools should have the approval of local school districts; and (6) charter schools should be required to make information available to the public. Four tables are included. (Contains 46 references.) (LMI)

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